

MENAI TOASTMASTERS CLUB



EVALUATE TO MOTIVATE

The cornerstone of the Toastmasters program is to provide positive, constructive feedback, as an Evaluator, to another Toastmaster or Guest, how has made a presentation. Whilst providing this all important positive feedback, it is also necessary to provide the presenter with a point or points for improvement, for their next presentation.

A poorly prepared and delivered evaluation, can be soul destroying and on many occasions, has resulted in the Guest or Member being evaluated to leave and not comeback, or simply not participate in any future club activities. The Toastmaster Club is a mutually and supportive environment and we all participate giving us a reciprocal and continuous learning experience. The more effective we are in evaluating each other, the more each one of us will benefit.

Audience members learn from the good example that an effective evaluation presents. Evaluators learn to sharpen their listening and impromptu speaking skills. Speakers benefit from effective evaluation by:

Providing Immediate Feedback.

Receiving immediate feedback after a speech helps to reinforce positive speaking behaviour as well as highlighting the areas which we need improvement.

Offering Methods for Improvement.

Evaluators can offer a new perspective and help us to recognize and solve any difficulties we experienced during our presentations.

Building and maintaining Self-Confidence.

As we learn from evaluations how to develop our strong points, correct or modify our weaker areas, we can't help but feel better about ourselves. The self-confidence that we gain as we improve our speaking skills, benefits us not only with our public speaking, but also in our personal and professional relationships.

Using the "Tell and Sell" Approach.

The method of evaluation used by Toastmasters is "Tell and Sell". This requires the evaluator to do all the talking while the speaker listens. The most obvious advantage of this method is its efficiency, the evaluation moves smoothly without interruption. Any discussion the speaker may wish to have with the evaluator can be held after the session. Remember, the evaluation is only a personal response to your presentation by that one person. You should feel free to ask other people for their reactions to your presentation after the session has concluded.

How to Deliver Effective Evaluation

Show That You are Interested.

You need to demonstrate that you are truly interested in both the speech as well as the speaker's ability to grow and improve. Your challenge is to point out both the strengths and weaknesses of the speech you have just heard in a helpful, encouraging and sincere manner, which will motivate the speaker to continue to improve.

Consider the Speaker's Objectives.

In order to evaluate effectively, you need to do your homework prior to the presentation. This means contacting the speaker in advance to review and discuss the manual objectives and evaluation guidelines.

By talking to the speaker in advance, you will be able to ascertain any concerns the speaker may have which he/she would like you to watch closely, such as eye contact, nervous gestures, vocal variety, or anything that's related to presentation skills.

You should take into consideration the individual needs, goals, sensitivities and experience level of the speaker when preparing to evaluate.

Personalise your Language.

Avoid using the following phrases, which can be very demoralizing:

"You didn't"
"You should have"
"You failed to"

There is a big difference between offering words of encouragement as an evaluator and handing down sentences like a judge. Think about your purpose as an evaluator – your purpose is to stimulate improvement. Consider structuring your evaluation by commenting on the following things about the speech:

What you saw!
What you heard!
What you felt!

By structuring your evaluation in this manner, you will develop very effective evaluation skills.

Evaluate the Speech – Not the Speaker.

As an evaluator, always keep your main purpose in mind; to support, help and encourage the speaker. Instead of evaluating the speaker's ideas for quality, your goal is to help that person communicate their ideas in a more effective manner. Your comments need to focus on the speaker's delivery rather than on the speaker as a person.

Remember: Evaluate what the Speaker does – Not what the Speaker Is.
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Promote Self-Confidence.

As an evaluator, not only must you listen, make notes and present your opinion, but also you must encourage and inspire the speaker to move on to the next speaking project, and to continue improving. This involves giving honest and sincere praise, positive reinforcement when improvements occur and helpful direction when necessary. Always end your evaluation on a positive note.

Sometimes when giving evaluations, particularly to new speakers, we feel that we should only give praise. This is flattering at first but in the long run it only demoralizes the speaker.

You have to remember that the purpose is to give points for improvement from which the speaker can gain some benefit. The following is a time proven formula, which will help you to produce an effective evaluation:

Commend, Commend, Recommend, Commend.
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Evaluations offer one of the most important learning tools within the Toastmasters program. When we evaluate, we are given the opportunity to polish our own skills as speakers, as well as assisting others in reaching their goals.

We owe it to ourselves, to those we evaluate and to the audience to provide a positive, constructive and informative evaluation.

Never use the word CRITICISM.

Please remember that the word “criticism” has a confronting sound about it, and thus should never be used in an evaluation. Instead, use phrases which suggest that you are trying to encourage the speaker, such as:

“As a point for improvement.....”, “I recommend that next time you could.....”,
“As a suggestion, try doing”

Remember to Smile, be Friendly and have Fun!!!!

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